

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 218730

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S/S:MR. BRIDGES

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION SINAI

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 218730

EXDIS - CAIRO PASS TO THORNE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG IS UN

SUBJECT: BEDOUINS IN THE BUFFER ZONE

1. SFM HAS BEEN REPORTING AN INCREASING
INCIDENCE OF BEDOUIN MOVEMENT IN THE VICINITY OF THE SFM
CAMP AND WATCH STATIONS.

2. IF IT IS POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO FURNISH IT WITHOUT RAISING
THIS DELICATE SUBJECT WITH EITHER THE EGYPTIANS OR THE
ISRAELIS OR U.N. REPRESENTATIVES, WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE
MORE INFORMATION ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF BEDOUINS IN THE
BUFFER ZONE THAN IS PRESENTLY AVAILABLE SO WE MAY BETTER
UNDERSTAND THE EVOLVING SITUATION AND BE IN A POSITION TO
ANTICIPATE ANY PROBLEMS THE BEDOUIN PRESENCE MIGHT POSE IN
THE FUTURE FOR THE SFM.

3. THE FIRST REFERENCE TO THE BEDOUINS IN OUR CABLE FILES
IS IN CAIRO 1491 OF FEBRUARY 4, 1976. GENERAL GAMASY WAS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 218730

REPORTED AS UNWILLING TO PUT ANYTHING IN WRITING BUT TO

AGREE VERBALLY TO ALLOW THE MOVEMENT OF BEDOUINS INTO ISRAELI-OCCUPIED TERRITORY TO WORK AND TO FISH. AMBASSADOR EILTS COMMENTED THAT "GAMASY POSITION IS CONSISTENT WITH THAT WHICH HE TOOK DURING THE SINAI II NEGOTIATIONS."

4. BEDOUINS WERE DISCUSSED AGAIN IN CAIRO 3728 (REPEATED TO SFM ON MARCH 23). GENERAL SIILASVUO WAS QUOTED AS HAVING BROUGHT UP THE "SUBJECT OF BEDOUINS IN NORTHERN PART OF BUFFER ZONE, WHO NOW NUMBER MORE THAN 7,000." WE GATHER, THEREFORE, THAT UNEF RECOGNIZES A BEDOUIN RESIDENCE IN PART OF THE BUFFER ZONE. YET SINAI 1455 REPORTED UNEF'S ROUNDING UP BEDOUINS AND ESCORTING THEM "...OUT OF THE BUFFER ZONE."

5. EARLY IN APRIL AMBASSADOR EILTS REPORTED (CAIRO 4598, SENT TO SFM) HE HAD BEEN TOLD BY GAMASY AND SIILASVUO IN SEPARATE MEETINGS THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD AGREED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EGYPTIAN ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER IN THE U.N.BUFFER ZONE TO HANDLE WELFARE, HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS OF THE BEDOUINS LIVING IN THE AREA.

6. SSM CONTRACT OFFICER KIMMEL MENTIONED LAST MONTH HAVING HEARD WHEN HE WAS AT SFM A REFERENCE TO A LINE SOMEWHERE IN THE NORTHERNPART OF THE BUFFER ZONE KNOWN AS THE "HEMINGWAY LINE" SOUTH OF WHICH THE BEDOUINS ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO PASS. IS THIS LINE THE SAME AS THE RUMANI-BALUSA LINE? WE NOTE THAT PERES AND COLONEL LEVINSON REPORTED TO THE ISRAELI CABINET AUGUST 22 THAT GENERAL SIILASVUO PROMISED TO ISSUE CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS TO PREVENT THE MOVEMENT OF BEDOUINS SOUTHWARD FROM THE RUMANI-BALUSA AREA (TEL AVIV 5768 REPEATED TO SFM AUGUST 24). IF THERE IS A FORMALLY AGREED LINE, IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE ITS MAP COORDINATES.

7. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION YOU HAVE ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS THAT ARE LEFT UNCLEAR FROM THE ABOVE, WHICH SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, BE RAISED WITH EGYPTIAN, ISRAELI, AND UN OFFICIALS.

A. IS IT UNEF PRACTICE ON ENCOUNTERING BEDOUINS IN THE
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PAGE 03 STATE 218730

BUFFER ZONE SOUTH OF THE RUMANI-BALUSA AREA TO ESCORT THEM TO THAT AREA OR OUT OF THE BUFFER ZONE ALTOGETHER?

B. HAS THE BEDOUIN POPULATION IN THE BUFFER ZONE BEEN GROWING, AND IF SO, WHAT IS IT CURRENTLY ESTIMATED TO BE?

C. WHAT IS THE LOCATION OF THE EGYPTIAN ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER FOR THE BEDOUINS IN THE BUFFER ZONE AND WHAT IS IT

DOING? DOES IT APPEAR TO BE ENCOURAGING BEDOUIN MOVEMENT
SOUTH OF THE RUMANI-BALUSA AREA?

D. WHAT ARE CURRENT PRACTICES IN GENERAL ON BEDOUIN MOVE-
MENT IN THE BUFFER ZONE AND ITS CONTROL? KISSINGER

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